

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 16, 2007

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
Rick Griffin, Selectman Representative
Gary Kubik, Precinct Representative
Russ Bernstein
Pat Collins
Victor DeMarco
Maury Friedman
Dick Hansen
Jack Lessard
Richard Nichols
Michael Pierce
Norman Silberdick (7:35)

Unexcused

Eileen Latimer

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee

Approval of Minutes – September 18, 2007

Moved by Mr. Lessard, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to approve the Minutes of September 18, 2007.

Vote: 10 yes, 0 no, 2 abstentions (Bernstein, Kubik). Motion passed.

Mr. Nichols said that in continuing his review of school budget information, 2006 information did not include Food Service so the reality is that the school budget is up 7% rather than 8%.

Chairman Woolsey reviewed the schedule of work sessions.

Mr. Pierce said that he had attended the School Board meeting recently. He said it was very informative. He asked about the disparity in promotion rates and is still waiting for an answer to that.

Chairman Woolsey said that this was the last meeting before the actual work sessions for the '08 budget begin. The work sessions are critical and every member of the Committee should make every effort to attend.

Chairman Woolsey said that she would like the Committee's input to formulate a list of questions that the Committee would like answered before starting the work sessions. This list can be submitted to Mr. Welch so that he can have an idea of information the Committee is requesting. (See complete list at end of Minutes)

Mr. Friedman passed out a list containing the following questions regarding the Fire Department:

- 1) What about the possibility of combining Police and Fire Department Dispatch?
- 2) How about re-establishing a Call Fireman roster?
- 3) Explain staffing of EMS calls.
- 4) Explain overtime allocation policies.
- 5) What about the possibility of sharing physical facilities with the Police Department?

Chairman Woolsey said another important question to ask is whether the Fire Department contract does or does not specifically mandate that all shifts are filled.

Chairman Woolsey discussed the Seafood Festival. She said Chief Lipe reported that the Fire Department overtime at 2/3 of the year was approximately \$491,000. This was broken down in approx. \$76,000 workers comp, approx. \$94,000 sick leave, approx. \$154,000 vacation and approx \$167,000 fireworks and Seafood Festival. Mr. Welch said that \$710,000 is the projection for the end of the year if the overtime continues at the same rate.

Chairman Woolsey asked Mr. Kubik to find out how the fireworks details were paid.

Chairman Woolsey would like a breakdown of any overtime in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments connected with the Seafood Festival. She said her concern is that there are revolving funds for private detail and money for private details should go into the revolving funds which should generate money. She would like a breakdown for 2007.

Chairman Woolsey said encumbrances are in the \$500,000 area if you look at the September close. This is a concern.

Chairman Woolsey said that the Selectman have discussed the possibility of combining the Health & Human Services articles, 20 in all, into one article.

Mr. Bernstein said that the problem here is that this will be a large amount. Mr. Pierce said that some may vote against a combined article because they don't care to contribute to a particular agency.

Chairman Woolsey said she did not believe that any Board of Selectmen has the authority to take it upon themselves to insert requests on the Warrants for private agencies. Agencies should petition. The Town Office should notify agencies when this should happen.

Mr. Lessard said he would like to ask why the four or five firefighters have been out for so long.

Mr. Hansen said overtime is a real problem and has to be brought under control.

Mr. Pierce said the Committee needs to be adamant with their concerns and the Board of Selectmen need to be firm. They backed off on the trash issue and did nothing.

Mr. Pierce asked the following question: In private industry if you are out on short term disability, you automatically move to long term disability after a time and are no longer an employee of the company. Does the Fire Department have such a thing as long term disability? Mr. DeMarco said he believed that at the end of one year, if a worker was injured on the job he can then apply for disability retirement with the state.

Mr. Pierce also asked if you get hurt outside of work, what is the criteria for how long you can be out on sick leave and vacation and then what happens after that?

Mr. Griffin said the reason the Board of Selectmen didn't do more on trash was because there was no public input. The Board of Selectmen will continue to study this issue. Mr. Griffin said the Beach provides the Town with \$600,000 a year and the people there feel they are entitled to something. Mr. Griffin said he had proposed a mandatory recycling article. Mr. Pierce said that the Lowell Festival recycles everything. Mr. Griffin said this should be taken care of before the next Seafood Festival.

Chairman Woolsey said that back in November 2005, members of the public were asking about discontinuing commercial trash pickup. The Board of Selectmen said they would look into it, but they never did.

Mandatory recycling was considered in the 80's, but was not implemented because there was no provision to enforce it.

Regarding the fire boat, Mr. DeMarco asked what was the frequency of use, how it is manned, etc. Given the lack of personnel, is it advantageous to keep this active or should it be mothballed until it can be adequately staffed?

Chairman Woolsey said Mr. Welch intends to control the use of the boat.

Mr. DeMarco asked if 80% of Deputy Silver's salary will continue to come out of the EMS revolving fund.

Mr. DeMarco asked if it would be possible to change personnel on the ambulance to the EMS revolving fund.

Mr. DeMarco said he felt most of the trash at the beach comes from day trippers and weekly rentals. He said he felt the businesses did a good job.

Chairman Woolsey suggested asking John Hangen how he arrived at his figures about trash.

Chairman Woolsey said she would request Mike Schwotzer to put the year's total revenue on the top of the pages showing the revolving funds.

Chairman Woolsey pointed out that the '08 budget will not contain any amount of money related to CBA agreements, if any, if negotiations are completed in the near future.

Mr. Friedman said he had no problem with a warrant article to make recycling mandatory. There should be increased focus and education programs. The Board of Selectmen should initiate an education program for Town employees and residents.

Mr. Griffin said people are already volunteering to work on this.

Mr. Bernstein said the Town pays \$23,000 per family per year for health insurance. He said he only pays \$12,000 for his family. Why does the Town pay twice as much?

Mr. Bernstein asked how the addition of four firefighters would reduce costs.

Mr. Silberdick said he would like to ask what plans can be made to effect change in the overtime.

Mr. DeMarco said that overtime is distributed on a weekly basis on a rotation. There are people who will work overtime and those who will not. If everyone did it, you would not see the high salaries.

Mr. Nichols said the Police Department does it the way it should be done by hiring part timers during summer months. However, the Fire Department contract says they cannot hire part time employees. The Board of Selectmen agreed to this in 2003.

Mr. Kubik suggested that the Precinct could be responsible for putting barrels on Ashworth Avenue. Mr. Kubik asked if this could be done.

Mr. Plouffe discussed the Social Service Agencies. He said they started out as warrant articles and that worked for a number of years. Then they were cut because of the default budget. If the Agencies petition and their warrant article passes, they will get their money. This is the way it should be done.

Precinct Report

Mr. Kubik said the Precinct is working on the 2008 budget.

Selectman's Report

Mr. Griffin said he personally feels that no matter how you look at it, the biggest percentage of the budget is employees. Negotiations are going on and it is necessary to wait and see what happens.

Chairman Woolsey said the meeting with the Fire Department on October 30th is critical and asked all Committee members to make every effort to attend.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Lessard **moved**, seconded by Mr. Pierce, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Hampton Budget Committee
October 16, 2007
Page 6

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman

QUESTIONS

Fire Department

1. What is the possibility of combining Police and Fire Department Dispatch?
2. How about re-establishing a Call Fireman roster?
3. Explain staffing of EMS calls.
4. Explain overtime allocation policies.
5. What about the possibility of sharing physical facilities with the Police Department?
6. Does the Fire Department contract specifically mandate that all shifts are filled?
7. Why were the four or five firefighters out for so long?
8. Does the Fire Department have such a thing as long term disability?
9. Regarding the fire boat, what is the frequency of use and how is it manned?
Given the lack of personnel, is it advantageous to keep this active or should it be mothballed until it can be adequately staffed?
10. Will 80% of Deputy Silver's salary continue to come out of the EMS revolving fund?
11. Why does the Town pay \$23,000 a year for family health insurance when it can be obtained for \$12,000 per year?
12. How would the addition of four firefighters reduce costs?
13. What plans can be made to cause change in the overtime?

Precinct

1. Could the Precinct be responsible for putting barrels on Ashworth Avenue?

General

1. Please give a breakdown of any overtime in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments connected with the Seafood Festival for 2007.